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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1999/292
17 March 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 17 MARCH 1999 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to forward herewith a letter dated 17 March 1999 from Živadin Jovanović, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, relative to the open threats of aggression by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its build-up of troops in the neighbouring Republic of Macedonia and containing a call addressed to you by the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to convene a meeting of the Security Council to prevail upon NATO and its members to cease its threats of use of force against Yugoslavia and stop a further build-up of troops (see annex).

I should be very grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

99-07468 (E) 180399

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Annex

Letter dated 17 March 1999 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia addressed to the President of the Security Council

Referring to my letter of 1 February 1999 concerning open threats of aggression by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (S/1999/107, annex), I should like to inform you of some recent developments.

Namely, there has been a build-up by NATO countries of troops and arms, which have been brought in from other parts of Europe and the world, in the immediate neighbourhood of Yugoslavia. According to available reports, more than 10,000 NATO troops have been deployed in the neighbouring Republic of Macedonia, along with 60 tanks, 250 armoured vehicles, several dozen combat helicopters, and a great many pieces of artillery, including 155-mm long-range guns. It has been announced that NATO troops in that neighbouring country would soon increase to over 30,000. There are also reports on military reinforcements as well as the establishment of foreign military bases in other neighbouring countries, in Albania in particular.

Such a build-up of foreign troops and military equipment, unprecedented in the post-war period, has been coupled with ultimatums by the highest NATO officials and by individual NATO countries to the effect that they are ready to launch attacks against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

We would like to draw the attention of the Security Council to such troop and arms build-ups and to undisguised threats of aggression by NATO against Yugoslavia, as a sovereign and independent founding State Member of the United Nations, causing the profound concern of the Government and the people of Yugoslavia and posing a threat to peace and security in the region. This is, at the same time, a blatant and flagrant violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the documents of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe prohibiting the threat or use of force in international relations. As I pointed out in my letter of 1 February, this represents a direct violation of Article 53, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations.

Also, while issuing open threats of aggression and ultimatums to Yugoslavia, senior NATO officials and those of some NATO countries, on the other hand, are maintaining contacts with, and extending assistance and support to, separatists and terrorists in the Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija, an integral part of sovereign Serbia and Yugoslavia. These factors and countries failed to take steps and measures to cut off the channels of finance, arming, training and infiltration of arms and terrorists into the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in breach of and ignoring the obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular its resolution 1160 (1998) of 31 March 1998.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia pursues an active and peaceful policy; it is committed to good-neighbourly relations, peace and stability in the

region. No threat is being posed from its territory, nor is it threatening the interests of any other countries, least of all the interests of NATO countries. It is determined to resolve all its internal problems by peaceful political means in compliance with international standards. This is equally true regarding a political, peaceful solution in Kosovo and Metohija within the framework of extensive self-governance and autonomy and equality for all national communities. With this approach and goal, as well as a principled and constructive attitude, our delegation is taking part in the meeting that is currently being held in Paris.

Troop and arms build-ups in the neighbourhood of Yugoslavia and open NATO threats cannot be justified on any pretext. This is surely not the way to facilitate the reaching of political agreement. However, there can be no doubt that this is the way to support the opponents of a peaceful political solution, and in particular to encourage the proponents of separatism and terrorism. In case of an attack, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will act in accordance with its legitimate right to defend itself.

I call upon you to convene a meeting of the Security Council so that this body, in line with its primary responsibility for peace and security, could urge NATO to cease its threats of use of force against Yugoslavia, to stop any further build-up of troops and arms in the region and to withdraw those already deployed, which would contribute to the reduction of tensions and elimination of unforeseen threats to peace and security in the region.

(Signed) Živadin JOVANOVIĆ

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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL PREPARED PURSUANT TO RESOLUTIONS 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998) AND 1203 (1998) OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998) of 31 March 1998, 1199 (1998) of 23 September 1998 and 1203 (1998) of 24 October 1998. It addresses the comprehensive monitoring regime established under Security Council resolution 1160 (1998) and humanitarian and human rights aspects of the situation in Kosovo covering the period since my previous report of 30 January 1999 (S/1999/99). Information contained in this report complements that provided by the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in his report to the Council of 26 February 1999 (S/1999/214). As I indicated in my letter of transmittal to that report, I have discontinued comprehensive reporting on the situation in Kosovo, which is being covered by OSCE in compliance with the Council's wish to be kept informed about the situation there.

II. COMPREHENSIVE REGIME TO MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROHIBITIONS IMPOSED BY SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1160 (1998)

2. As stated in my report of 5 August 1998 (S/1998/712), the overall resources pledged by organizations willing to participate in the monitoring of the prohibitions imposed by resolution 1160 (1998) did not allow for the establishment of a comprehensive monitoring regime as envisaged by that resolution. I also stated that, nonetheless, their proposed contributions, coupled with that of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), could provide a useful framework for reporting on violations and for assisting the Committee established by resolution 1160 (1998) in discharging its mandate. These organizations, as well as UNPREDEP, have provided useful information in their reports to the above Committee.

3. The termination of the mandate of UNPREDEP will affect efforts to monitor the implementation of the prohibitions established by Security Council resolution 1160 (1998). Accordingly, the Security Council may wish to reconsider the modalities for the monitoring regime. In the meantime, it would

be necessary for representatives of participating organizations and the Secretariat to continue to hold periodic meetings in order to exchange information and address practical issues arising in connection with their monitoring activities.

III. HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN KOSOVO

Violence

4. The humanitarian and human rights situation in Kosovo remains grave. The general insecurity, combined with continuing and unpredictable outbreaks of violence, has resulted in a cycle of displacement and return throughout Kosovo. During the reporting period, targeted killings of civilians, summary executions, mistreatment of detainees and new abduction cases were reported almost daily. Since 20 January, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) has registered more than 65 cases of violent death, including one in custody. The Office's background investigations of targeted violence further confirmed the observations expressed in my previous report that the nature of violent activity in Kosovo, which has now spread to urban areas, has increased the number of persons who live in fear of being directly affected by violence or arbitrary treatment.

5. While clashes between the Serbian security forces and Kosovo Albanian paramilitary units continued at a relatively lower level, civilians in Kosovo are increasingly becoming the main target of violent acts. An increasingly common pattern of individual killings throughout the region accounts for the majority of deaths. Most violent incidents have remained unclaimed. This has contributed to the climate of fear and insecurity, causing deep distrust among communities and adding to the humanitarian and social problems in Kosovo.

6. The following narrative of when and where major incidents occurred suggests how violence against civilians in Kosovo continues to spread. On 18 January 1999, a Serb man was killed after reportedly failing to stop at a Kosovo Liberation Army's (KLA) roadblock in Nedakovac, near Kosovska Mitrovica. On 19 January, the body of a Kosovo Albanian teacher was discovered near Istok. On 20 January, two Serbian women (mother and daughter) were wounded after unidentified persons opened fire on their house, apparently targeting the father. On 21 January, a Kosovo Albanian man and woman were killed when their car was fired upon at an intersection outside Orahovac. The same day, the body of a Kosovo Albanian doctor was found near the Pec-Mitrovica highway.

7. On 24 January, five Kosovo Albanians, two men, one woman and two boys, aged 11 and 12, were killed on the Rakovina-Jablanica road, while repairing their tractor. According to international observers, some 60 spent cartridges were found on the scene of the incident and the bodies revealed multiple bullet wounds.

8. On 25 January, a Kosovo Albanian was killed and his son severely wounded near Decani when masked assailants fired a reported 55 rounds into their car. On 26 January, a Serb man was severely wounded in an attack directed at his house in the Istok municipality. The body of a 23-year-old Serb was found under

a driveway in the outskirts of Kosovska Mitrovica on 27 January; the body may have been moved to that location after the victim was killed elsewhere.

9. On 29 January, Kosovo Albanian sources reported that the body of a Kosovo Albanian was found in Bistrazin village and that another Albanian, close to the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), was seriously wounded in front of his apartment by two shots fired by unknown persons. On 30 January, a 36-year-old Kosovo Albanian from Pec was found shot in the head on the Pec-Pristina road. That same day, the body of another reputed "Kosovo Albanian loyalist", a physics teacher from Djakovica, was found in the village of Gradis. In Istok municipality, an elderly Serb was killed and his 72-year-old wife was injured when unidentified persons threw a grenade into their house in the village of Rakos.

10. On 31 January, the body of a Kosovo Albanian from the village of Begov Vukovac was found, shot in the head, south of Istok. That same day, in Stimlje municipality, masked gunmen reportedly broke into a house in the village of Donje Godance and wounded one man and two boys.

11. Attacks and killings in urban areas continued during the first half of February. On 4 February, bodies of three Kosovo Albanians were found in a car between the villages of Istinic and Gornja Lika, in Decani municipality, and the body of a Serb was found near the village of Rastavica. All had been shot. On 4 February, a Serb male was killed by automatic weapon fire while travelling on the Pec-Djakovica highway.

12. On 7 February, bodies of two Kosovo Albanians reported missing since 3 January were found in Kacanik, south of Urosevac. During the night of 7-8 February, the body of an unidentified man aged about 30 was found in the village of Livadja in Lipljan municipality. At this writing, UNHCHR is attempting to clarify several reports of bodies found in or around Djakovica on 8 February. The bodies of two young persons, one a 17-year-old boy and one a 20-year-old woman, were reported found in two different locations in a Djakovica suburb. The body of a Kosovo Albanian male, dead from gunshot wounds, was found in his car in the Djakovica area, near the village of Trakanic. The same day, again in Djakovica, bodies of a male and an elderly woman were also found. Both victims, who are believed to be from the Roma community, died of gunshot wounds to the neck. Bodies of two Kosovo Albanians from the village of Goden near Djakovica were found on 10 February.

13. On 11 February, four more bodies were discovered in different areas of Kosovo. According to media reports, the body of the Kosovo Albanian owner of an Istok tea room was found on the Zac-Zablace road; he had been shot in the head. Two men, one a Kosovo Albanian shot in the head, the other, as-yet-unidentified, were found in separate locations in Novo Selo, near Pec. The body of an unidentified male was found in a pond in Klina.

14. Targeted violence against civilians in Kosovo is taking new, even more dangerous, forms. In particular, recently increased terrorist acts against Serb and Albanian establishments in urban areas, including grenade attacks on cafes and shops, are a cause of serious concern. Since the end of January, at least 10 such incidents in Pristina, Pec, Kosovska Mitrovica and Urosevac have been

reported. The investigation by UNHCHR indicated that in many cases these establishments had been frequented by Serbs and Albanians and no incidents between them had previously been reported. The latest attack, on 13 February in the main town square in Urosevac, was particularly horrible: 12 people were wounded and about 20 neighbouring shops and several cars parked nearby heavily damaged. On 17 February, another explosive device planted at the Urosevac market was discovered and deactivated by the Kosovo Verification Mission. The result of these attacks is the growing alienation of the Serb and Albanian communities, a pervasive feeling of insecurity and the shrinking of the remaining ground for coexistence.

15. Following these grenade attacks and a number of killings in Pristina and in the areas of Pec and Djakovica, UNHCHR field staff have expressed concern that, particularly in these three urban areas, civilians known for open-mindedness and flexibility in community relations, as well as professionals, intellectuals and moderate community activists, have been targeted. Increasing pressure on the urban elite in Pristina, Pec and Djakovica has also frequently been cited to UNHCHR staff as a source of tension and apprehension in Prizren.

Racak investigation

16. On 10 February 1999, the 40 remaining bodies of the Kosovo Albanian victims of the Racak massacre were handed over to their families. A funeral was held in Racak on 11 February. The release of the bodies had become a point of contention between the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Kosovo Verification Mission. As of 1 February, the team of Finnish forensic experts had completed or monitored autopsies on 24 of the 40 bodies brought from the Racak mosque to Pristina. Sixteen bodies had been autopsied by Serbian forensic specialists before the arrival of the Finnish team. Five bodies of the total of 45 dead at Racak were reportedly removed from the village by families and were not autopsied. The Finnish team stressed, during its two-week stay in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, that it was not carrying out an investigation into the events at Racak, but an examination of the bodies moved from the place of death to the mosque in Racak and then to the Pristina morgue. After the events at Racak, the scene was not isolated; the circumstances of evidence-gathering and the chain of custody of evidence remain unclear. The Finnish team indicated that it would release the results of its examination in Racak to the European Union and to the Pristina district court in early March. There is no indication at this time of action by the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to bring the perpetrators of the Racak massacre to justice.

Abductions and taking of hostages

17. During this period, no new information emerged or was volunteered on the whereabouts and fate of persons abducted or reported missing. Eleven persons were abducted, 10 Serbs, among whom five were released and one escaped, and one Kosovo Albanian, who was found dead. On 21 January, five Serb civilians (three men and two women) were abducted in the village of Nevoljane, Vucitrn municipality, and released on 23 January through mediation by the Kosovo Verification Mission. The KLA spokesman in Pristina stated that the five were not kidnapped. Instead, he claimed that "stopping, disarming and the arrest of

the five members of the Serb nationality ... were performed in accordance with the international conventions and norms, and for the reason of public security and order in that village".

18. During the night of 8-9 February, one Serb civilian went missing near Kosovska Mitrovica. The following night, two Serb civilians were abducted near Novo Selo on the Pristina-Vucitrn road. One managed to escape and reported that he was kidnapped by persons wearing KLA uniforms and insignia. On 10 February, the body of a Kosovo Albanian from Urosevac, who had been kidnapped the day before, was discovered. On 11 February, Serbian sources reported that two plainclothes police officers were abducted the night before, after having last been seen off-duty in Kosovo Polje, outside Pristina.

Detention and trials

19. Reports of arbitrary detention and systematic ill-treatment of Kosovo Albanians in police detention and under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice continue to emerge from UNHCHR field interviews and during court testimony. According to information released by Serbian Public Prosecutor, Dragica Krsmanovic, 2,007 persons in Kosovo have been charged with criminal offences of terrorism, endangering the territorial integrity of the country and seditious activity. Of those, 1,060 are currently in detention and 824 are under indictment. As earlier reported, the number of Kosovo Albanians detained, questioned, subjected to "informative talks" or arrested and subsequently released by police is not known.

20. On 16 January it was reported that Halit Aliaj, aged 48, who was arrested the day before, died while in police custody in the Djakovica police station. UNHCHR is making further inquiry into this case. Three other persons are known by UNHCHR to have died in 1998 while in police custody in Djakovica.

21. UNHCHR staff continue to monitor proceedings in which Kosovo Albanian defendants are accused of alleged terrorist or anti-state activity. The number of persons already sentenced in courts of first instance is relatively small. Most proceedings are still pending. Regardless of the size of the group of defendants or the number of witnesses to be called, most proceedings monitored by the Office have been discontinued after a hearing lasting only one working day or less, and subsequent hearings in the same case are frequently postponed for only a few days short of the maximum postponement allowed by law. As a result, defendants remain in detention indefinitely. On 8 February, proceedings against 24 "Orahovac group" defendants were once again postponed until 10 March. The group was arrested on or about 21 July 1998 and has been in detention, under systematic abuse, at Lipljan prison ever since. The hearing on 8 February was the first time any of the accused gave court testimony after more than six months' detention and after repeated postponements.

22. During this reporting period, sentences were handed over on 5 February in the "Urosevac group" case. Of the 28-member Urosevac group, 11 were arrested in June 1998; two of those defendants died while in police custody, allegedly as a result of torture. The nine remaining defendants were first brought before the Pristina district court in late December and mid-January. Seventeen defendants were tried in absentia. All nine standing trial claimed they had been tortured

and still had visible traces of injuries allegedly inflicted by police and state security officials, including after their arraignment before an investigative judge. The defendants, including those tried in absentia, were sentenced to periods ranging from two and a half to 15 years.

23. On 10 February, the district court of Prizren sentenced eight men from Orahovac municipality to five years' imprisonment on charges of terrorism. The accused had all been charged with membership in the "so-called 'KLA'". Individual charges included providing medicine, food and fuel to KLA, possession of weapons, carrying out patrols and opening fire on patrols of the Ministry of the Interior. The decision of the court relied on confessions of the accused made before the investigating judge and photocopies of alleged lists of KLA membership. No originals of these documents were submitted by the prosecution as evidence. In earlier proceedings, defendants had maintained that their statements were made under coercion and torture, allegations not examined by the court. In explaining why the court did not consider these allegations, the presiding judge, on pronouncing his sentence, stated that the court would have considered these allegations seriously were it not for the fact that some of the accused had admitted they were KLA members. The court's final judgement did not indicate which acts had been proved to have been committed by each individual accused. The presiding judge did indicate in his explanation of his judgement that the strategy of defence attorneys had compelled him to issue heavy sentences.

Displacements

24. To keep count of the numbers of displaced is difficult, but the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in consultation with non-governmental organization (NGO) partners, believes the number inside Kosovo stands at some 211,000, while there are an estimated 25,000 displaced in Montenegro. To assess the numbers of returns is even more difficult, given the long-term displacement of some, the short-term and sometimes repeated displacement, combined with return, of others. Therefore, UNHCR believes that it is more appropriate at this stage to address the humanitarian needs of the war-affected, including displaced, returnees, host families and those who never moved but lost their property and means of livelihood. The United Nations humanitarian agencies and NGOs are together providing relief assistance to some 420,000 persons in Kosovo and Montenegro.

25. A resumption of hostilities in Kosovo in January and February resulted in new displacement of population. Clashes between Kosovo Albanian paramilitary units and Serbian forces in the Podujevo area have prevented the return of some 15,000 displaced from about 17 villages. Serb and Albanian homes along the main Pristina-Podujevo road remain deserted, as intermittent fighting occurs some 3 kilometres to the west. This area has witnessed a pattern of displacement, return and fresh displacement. In Drenica, Suva Reka, Stimlje, Prizren and Vucitrn similar clashes also led to a new displacement of population. In some cases return took place, at least of some of the displaced, as soon as the violence passed; in other places, where the presence of Serbian security forces or Kosovo Albanian paramilitary units continued, fear prevented early return.

26. February was also marked by the continuing departure of the Serbian population from towns and villages where they had been in the minority, or where clashes between Kosovo Albanian paramilitary units and security forces occurred. According to information provided by the Serbian Commissioner for Refugees, some 90 villages in central and western Kosovo have lost their entire Serbian population in recent months, while towns like Podujevo and Kosovska Mitrovica have seen a reduction of the Serbian population. The estimated number of displaced Serbs within Kosovo is 10,000 while 30,000 more have moved to other parts of Serbia. In contrast, Kosovo Albanians who have lost or never had identity documents are afraid to move from their villages for fear of harassment by the security forces. UNHCR is seeking to prevent further displacement and to facilitate visits of persons without documentation to the appropriate police stations in order to secure identity documents.

Return movements

27. Throughout the reporting period, some returns have continued to take place, especially where the OSCE/Kosovo Verification Mission has established a continuing presence. In Slapuzane, south of Pristina, for example, 1,200 formerly displaced persons have returned. In Malisevo more than half of the former 3,000 residents are back in their village, while in Junik, more than 1,500 of the inhabitants are back in their homes. Following the burial, on 13 February, of 40 of those killed at Racak, the OSCE/Kosovo Verification Mission established a continuing presence there and some villagers have since returned. In Lodja, a village on the outskirts of Pec that was almost totally destroyed last summer, UNHCR and NGOs are assisting a group of about 16 families in repairing the largely undamaged school building. These families are now living in the school while undertaking the major task of rebuilding their homes.

Humanitarian assistance

28. Delivery of humanitarian assistance has continued almost uninterrupted throughout the month of February, despite the violence and severe weather. UNHCR has coordinated and led three multi-agency convoys six days per week, bringing systematic assistance to the displaced, the returned and to the war-affected population. Some relief assistance by NGOs working outside the escorted convoy system has been disrupted. There were reports of confiscation by the Serbian security forces of local trucks contracted by an NGO and of relief items belonging to another. Moreover, cases of harassment of relief NGOs were also reported. Some NGOs have been repeatedly visited by the regular and the financial police and questioned about their activities, others reported aggressive behaviour by KLA members.

Shelter survey

29. UNHCR and UNICEF worked with 14 NGOs from November 1998 to February 1999 to undertake a shelter survey covering 654 villages in 19 municipalities affected by the conflict in Kosovo, 440 villages were directly affected by the conflict, with damage ranging from slight to complete destruction. These villages had a total of 66,686 family houses before the conflict. Half of these houses have differing degrees of damage and 22,239 houses require major reconstruction. The resulting Shelter Report catalogues the extent of damage, village by village,

for each of the 19 municipalities surveyed, and will prove an important document in the planning of priorities for repair and reconstruction.

30. UNICEF, in cooperation with five international NGOs, has conducted a school damage assessment survey in 13 municipalities. The survey indicated that out of 900 schools, 163 have been destroyed or seriously damaged, while the remaining have minor damages or have been looted.

IV. OBSERVATIONS

31. UNHCR and its United Nations and NGOs partners will continue their efforts, in these risky conditions, to protect and assist the large number of refugees and displaced persons, and to support the population affected by the 12 months of conflict in Kosovo. There is strong apprehension, however, that violence against civilians and clashes between Serbian security forces and Kosovo Albanian paramilitary units will continue, with the resultant displacement of the civilian population. Cooperation between UNHCR and the Kosovo Verification Mission will remain crucial in monitoring developments and reacting rapidly in order to meet the needs of the displaced and their host communities. UNHCR and its partners have updated contingency and preparedness plans, but it is clear that any break in the continuity of humanitarian action would create further suffering.

32. I share the strong concerns of the UNHCHR about the spread of violence against civilians in Kosovo. Beyond the unacceptable actions of the Serbian security forces, the recent dangerous terrorist bombings are causing a growing number of victims. Terror tactics by Government forces, ethnically motivated violence, arbitrary treatment, targeted killings, abductions and bomb attacks must be halted by those responsible.

33. It is obvious that the humanitarian problems in Kosovo are a consequence of the armed conflict and the political crisis and they are difficult to separate from security issues. I am increasingly alarmed that continued confrontation in Kosovo, including persistent breaches of the ceasefire, has led to a substantial aggravation of the situation. According to OSCE, the current security environment in Kosovo is characterized by disproportionate use of force, including mortar and tank fire, by the Yugoslav authorities in response to persistent attacks and provocations by the Kosovo Albanian paramilitaries. As tensions mount in Kosovo, the number of Yugoslav troops deployed in the field exceeds the agreed level by a factor of five. Kosovo Albanian paramilitary units are consolidating their presence throughout Kosovo, including areas they did not control before. As a result, fighting now affects areas previously untouched by hostilities, leading to further deterioration of the situation and new displacements of civilian population.

34. Further fighting has rendered the October 1998 ceasefire agreement almost meaningless. I urge both parties to halt military activities in Kosovo, to comply fully with relevant Security Council resolutions and honour their commitments under the October 1998 agreements. In particular, the Yugoslav authorities should immediately reduce the number of troops deployed in the field

to the level established in October 1998 and Kosovo Albanian paramilitary units should refrain from any provocative actions.

35. I strongly support efforts by the Contact Group to provide a political framework for a settlement of the crisis. I encourage the parties to seize this opportunity to achieve peace and autonomy for the people of Kosovo by negotiation, while respecting the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

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Distr.
GENERAL

S/1999/294
17 March 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL PURSUANT TO SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1216 (1998) RELATIVE TO THE SITUATION IN GUINEA-BISSAU

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 1216 (1998) of 21 December 1998, by which the Council requested me to keep it regularly informed of the situation in Guinea-Bissau and to submit a report to it by 17 March 1999 on the implementation of the Abuja Agreement (S/1998/1028, annex), including the implementation by the interposition force of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) of its mandate.

2. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Kieran Prendergast, briefed the Council on the overall situation in Guinea-Bissau on 4 February 1999. The present report focuses on the Council's specific request for information on the implementation of the Abuja Agreement, which seeks to restore peace to Guinea-Bissau.

II. THE ABUJA AGREEMENT

3. Under the terms of the Abuja Agreement signed at Abuja, on 1 November 1998, the parties to the conflict in Guinea-Bissau, namely the Government of President João Bernardo Vieira and the self-proclaimed military junta in that country agreed:

(a) To reaffirm the cease-fire agreement signed in Praia on 26 August 1998;

(b) To the total withdrawal from Guinea-Bissau of all foreign troops, to be accomplished simultaneously with the deployment of the ECOMOG interposition force, which was to take over from the withdrawn forces;

(c) That the ECOMOG interposition force would guarantee security along the Guinea-Bissau/Senegal border, keep the warring parties apart and guarantee free access to humanitarian organizations and agencies to reach the affected

civilian population; the Oswaldo Vieira international airport and the seaport were to be opened with immediate effect;

(d) To immediately put in place a government of national unity, which would include, among others, representatives of the self-proclaimed junta, in line with the agreement already reached between the parties;

(e) To hold general and presidential elections not later than the end of March 1999; those elections would be observed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the international community.

4. The Abuja Agreement was the first formal framework to which the leaders of the ex-belligerent forces, President Vieira and General Ansumane Mane, personally committed themselves. It was witnessed and signed by ECOWAS leaders as well as by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Ibrahima Fall. The signing of the agreement was seen as a demonstration of the readiness of both sides to begin working together towards returning the country to peace and normalcy.

5. In order to carry out the effective and timely implementation of the Abuja Agreement, ECOWAS asked the international community for logistical and other material support. At a meeting with me, on 11 December 1998, an ECOWAS ministerial delegation on the Guinea-Bissau issues reiterated that ECOWAS needed logistical and financial support in order to proceed with the speedy deployment of the ECOMOG interposition force, the key operational support instrument for the implementation of the Agreement on the ground. The delegation emphasized the importance of United Nations/ECOWAS collaboration and asked me to appoint a representative in that country.

III. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ABUJA AGREEMENT

A. Political aspects

Installation of the Government of National Unity

6. Following agreement between President Vieira and General Mane, on 3 December 1998, Francisco Fadul was appointed Prime Minister to lead the new transitional Government of National Unity called for under the Agreement. To address issues related to the structure and the composition of that Government, President Vieira and General Mane met, at the invitation of President Gnassingbe Eyadema, the current Chairman of ECOWAS, in Lomé, and on 15 December 1998 signed an Additional Protocol to the Abuja Agreement on this matter.

7. Subsequently, on 8 January 1999, in conformity with the formula outlined in the Additional Protocol of 15 December, members of the transitional Government of National Unity were appointed. Five ministers (including the Foreign Minister) as well as three secretaries of State were nominated to that Government by President Vieira, while three ministers (including the Ministers of Defence and Internal Administration) and four secretaries of State were

nominated by the self-proclaimed junta. Despite the announcement that the new Government would be sworn in on 22 January, Prime Minister Fadul was reported to have stated that the Government would begin functioning only after foreign troops invited by President Vieira had left Guinea-Bissau. The resumption of fighting on 31 January further delayed the installation of the Government.

8. Immediately following renewed fighting, President Eyadema launched intensive efforts to secure a cease-fire and dispatched two envoys to Bissau with a draft cease-fire agreement, which President Vieira and General Mane signed on 3 February. On 17 February, both leaders met with President Eyadema in Lomé and agreed to re-energize the implementation of the Abuja accords. To that end, President Vieira and General Mane undertook formally, as reflected in the final communiqué issued following their meeting, never again to resort to arms and agreed that the Government of National Unity should be inaugurated as soon as possible.

9. Subsequently, on 20 February, the Government of National Unity was formally inaugurated in Bissau at a ceremony chaired by President Vieira in the presence of General Mane and attended also by senior Guinea-Bissau and foreign officials, including the Prime Minister of Togo, who represented President Eyadema.

10. The swearing in of the new Government of National Unity constituted a significant step forward in the peace process. However, the effective functioning of the Government has been hampered by a number of obstacles, including the lack of adequate facilities and staff and other resources, since the fighting destroyed many government buildings and installations and caused civil servants and other professional cadres to seek refuge in other countries. The disruption of the country's economic and monetary system and the lack of operational funds, in addition to the considerable level of mistrust between the two sides, have also hindered the work of the new, specially constituted Government, as it seeks to function cohesively as a team.

B. Military and security aspects

The deployment of ECOMOG and the withdrawal of foreign forces

11. Despite enormous logistical, financial and other difficulties, an advance ECOMOG contingent of 110 Togolese troops was deployed in Guinea-Bissau between 26 December 1998 and 2 January 1999. A further contingent of 300 troops was deployed on 4 February. Currently, the ECOMOG interposition force in Guinea-Bissau stands at 600 troops, composed of contingents from Benin, the Gambia, the Niger and Togo. Mali has recently announced its intention to send a contingent of 125 soldiers.

12. With the arrival of ECOMOG forces, foreign troops began to withdraw, with their departure expected to be completed in the coming days.

13. ECOMOG has established its operational and command headquarters at Bissau, from where its troops are dispatched for operations in other parts of the country. Owing to the lack of adequate communications equipment, troops operating in other parts of the country generally return on the same day to

Bissau to reduce the risk of being cut off from contact with the force headquarters. To enhance its patrol and reconnaissance activities in Bissau and elsewhere in the country, ECOMOG has indicated a need, in particular, for four-wheel drive vehicles, International Maritime Satellite Organization and mobile radio communication equipment.

14. As called for under the Abuja Agreement, ECOMOG forces are providing security at the sea port, which has reopened, and at the international airport, which has reopened for humanitarian flights, but not yet to commercial traffic. The forces also provide security for the President and the Prime Minister and escort representatives of the two sides to meetings and other functions, especially in Bissau. Furthermore, with some 100,000 people displaced throughout the country, ECOMOG helps ensure access for humanitarian agencies to reach the affected populations.

15. The deployment of ECOMOG along the Guinea-Bissau/Senegal border has yet to begin. ECOMOG has indicated that this task, specifically called for under the Abuja accords, will require more troops. Divergent views have emerged among authorities in Guinea-Bissau regarding this issue. The President and his supporters advocate the need for additional troops, while the Prime Minister and representatives of the junta have expressed the opinion that enough progress has been made in the peace process to make the arrival of more troops unnecessary.

16. Following agreement between President Vieira and General Mane in Lomé on 17 February, in which they "reiterated the need for the parties to the conflict to begin the disarmament and encampment of troops", ECOMOG has begun the task of disarming the forces of the two ex-belligerents. In order to coordinate the disarmament process, a special commission, including representatives of ECOMOG and of forces loyal to President Vieira and of the self-appointed military junta, has been established in Bissau. ECOMOG reports that it has recovered all heavy weapons country-wide and that these arms are now under its custody, stored in depots in different locations and guarded by ECOMOG troops. ECOMOG further reports that the collection of small weapons and light arms has also been concluded in the capital and is being extended to other locations. The weapons are stored in containers, with the three parties represented in the joint commission each having a key. It is widely acknowledged that the gathering of small and light weapons is likely to be more challenging, as the country is reported to be awash in weapons.

17. ECOMOG has also launched a demining programme in collaboration with the two former warring parties. As a first step, based on information provided by the two sides, it has started to demarcate and mark the mined areas. Further action in the demining of identified mine sites would require appropriate equipment, other resources and expertise, which are currently lacking.

18. An agreement between ECOWAS and Guinea-Bissau defining the operations, composition and status of ECOMOG on the territory of Guinea-Bissau is expected to be signed shortly by the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Lansana Kouyaté, and representatives of President Vieira and the self-proclaimed military junta.

19. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of Security Council resolution 1216 (1998), a report by ECOWAS on the deployment and operation of ECOMOG is under preparation and will be forwarded to the Council as soon as it is received.

C. Electoral aspects

20. As indicated in paragraph 3 (e) above, the Abuja Agreement calls for the holding of elections "not later than the end of March 1999". It is now clear that it will be impossible to meet that deadline, owing largely to accumulated delays in the implementation of the peace accords. However, it is important for the successful conclusion of the peace process that this crucial task be rescheduled.

21. The rescheduling of elections is also important in view of the signs of constitutional uncertainty emerging around varying interpretations of the duration of the respective terms of office of the President of the Republic and of the National Assembly. According to the Constitution, the National Assembly's mandate should have expired in July 1998, a period that coincided with the military uprising in the country. In November 1998, the Assembly met and passed a bill to extend its own mandate, a procedure provided for in the Constitution. However, the act was never promulgated by the President, as required, though he did not formally veto it. On the other hand, the President's term is due to expire on 29 September 1999. An election held after that date may introduce a problem as to the extension of his mandate. This is an issue that needs to be addressed in a spirit of openness, compromise and good will.

22. The various parties concerned in Guinea-Bissau, including representatives of the two signatories to the Abuja Agreement, have expressed to recent United Nations missions, including a mission from the Department of Political Affairs to Guinea-Bissau from 6 to 13 March 1999, their firm interest to have elections held as soon as possible. However, there are different points of view as to when the elections should be held. Critical factors that have been cited in arguments for and against prospective dates include the onset of the rainy season by July/August, the desirability of ensuring the resettlement of internally displaced persons as well as the return of refugees (including, in particular, civil servants), the departure of foreign troops, the reunification/reorganization of the armed forces, the completion of disarmament and demilitarization, and the demobilization and resettlement of surplus military personnel.

23. Both President Vieira and Prime Minister Fadul have recently written to me to request United Nations assistance for the presidential and legislative elections. Specifically, they have requested the coordination of all international community assistance, the provision of technical assistance to the electoral authorities, and the coordination of international observation of the polls. As a first step towards considering possible United Nations support, provision for an electoral officer has been included in the United Nations Peace-building Support Office to be set up in Bissau. Furthermore, there are ongoing arrangements between the office of the Focal Point for Electoral Affairs

in the Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme to determine the exact needs that should be met through technical assistance.

IV. THE PEACE-BUILDING SUPPORT OFFICE

24. On 3 March 1999, the Security Council approved my proposal to establish a United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) to be headed by a Representative of the Secretary-General (S/1999/233). Subsequently, a small mission from the Department of Political Affairs visited Bissau from 8 to 11 March 1999. The purpose of the mission was to assess the situation on the ground and to determine the logistical and other requirements for the establishment and operation of the new office. All the political actors welcomed the decision to appoint a Representative of the Secretary-General. I shall shortly inform the Council of the name of the person who will be my Representative in Guinea-Bissau. I have instructed the Department of Political Affairs and other concerned units in the Secretariat to do their utmost to ensure the earliest possible deployment of UNOGBIS.

25. You will recall that one of the primary functions of UNOGBIS in the post-conflict environment in which it will operate is "to provide the political framework and leadership for harmonizing and integrating the activities of the United Nations system in the country, particularly during the transitional period leading up to general and presidential elections" (see S/1999/232). In this connection, I intend to write to all heads of agencies, programmes, offices and funds of the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, requesting them to lend their support to UNOGBIS and to my Representative. Without this support, the holistic response to post-conflict situations which I had advocated in my report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/1998/318), cannot be achieved. In pursuit of this integrated approach, the official serving as the United Nations Resident Coordinator will also act as Deputy to the Representative of the Secretary-General.

26. Another principal function of UNOGBIS is to facilitate, in close cooperation with the parties concerned, the implementation of the Abuja Agreement. In order to ensure that this task is performed effectively, my Representative will work with regional States, ECOWAS, and other actors inside and outside the region.

V. OBSERVATIONS

27. The post-conflict situation in Guinea-Bissau remains very fragile. The economy, basic social services and state institutions all need to be rebuilt virtually from scratch. The people of Guinea-Bissau need a durable peace to attend to their shattered livelihoods.

28. I therefore strongly hope that the parties will translate into concrete measures the commitments they undertook under the Abuja Agreement. The significant actions they have taken, so far, towards the implementation of that Agreement are steps in the right direction. In this regard, I wish to commend

the efforts both of the regional leaders and of civil society inside Guinea-Bissau for their unstinting support during and after the crisis. I should like, in particular, to commend President Eyadema, the current Chairman of ECOWAS, for his timely actions and his leadership, which have made it possible for the parties to resolve their differences peacefully and work together in a spirit of national reconciliation. I am heartened by the undertaking made by President Vieira and General Mane, in the presence of the ECOWAS Chairman, never to resort to arms again. I trust that the same spirit of compromise will guide their steps as they attempt to reconcile their differing views on the date of the next general and presidential elections. The United Nations stands ready to support their efforts. I am confident that the "Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau", recently established in New York under the Chairmanship of the Gambia, will do the same.

29. The dedication, courage and professionalism shown by ECOMOG troops in the discharge of their mandate under the Abuja Agreement deserve special mention. I should like to express my appreciation to those Member States that have made possible the deployment of ECOMOG to Guinea-Bissau, and I encourage them and other Member States to make timely contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund set up last month to support ECOMOG.

UNITED NATIONS **A S**

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/53/866
S/1999/295
18 March 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 110
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Identical letters dated 17 March 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Cambodia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith an aide-mémoire on the report of the United Nations Group of Experts for Cambodia of 18 February 1999, issued by the Royal Government of Cambodia on 12 March 1999 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 110, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) OUCH Borith
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Aide-mémoire on the report of the United Nations Group of Experts for Cambodia of 18 February 1999, issued by the Government of Cambodia on 12 March 1999

- In spite of its infamous record of the most serious human rights violation, Democratic Kampuchea was allowed to occupy the Cambodian seat at the United Nations until the signing of the Paris Peace Accords for Cambodia in 1991.

- In the framework of the Paris Peace Accords, the Khmer Rouge was not only legitimized by the international community as one of the parties to the peace talks, but was also seated in the Supreme National Council (SNC) of Cambodia - the organ of the supreme power of Cambodia during the transition period.

- By refusing to take part in the 1993 election organized under the provisions of the Paris Peace Agreements, the Khmer Rouge made itself outlawed for boycotting the peace process and resuming the guerilla warfare.

- Hence the Paris Peace Accords have not brought a total peace and full national reconciliation to the country, as laid down in the Peace Accords.

- Even though the Khmer Rouge kept on waging war against the Royal Government of Cambodia, ***His Majesty the King*** of Cambodia, ***Samdech Preah Bat Norodom Sihanouk***, being desirous for peace and national reconciliation, graciously offered to preside over the further peace talks between the legitimate National Assembly and Royal Government of Cambodia on the one side, and the Group of Khmer Rouge leaders on the other, held in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in May 1994.

- These peace talks continued through a working group until July 1994, when the Law on Outlawing the "Democratic Kampuchea" Group was adopted by the National Assembly.

- In June 1997, while the Khmer Rouge still continued its acts of war against the Royal Government of Cambodia, and thereby causing insecurity in many parts of the country, the two Prime Ministers of the Kingdom of Cambodia requested the assistance of the United Nations to bring the Khmer Rouge leaders to justice.

- Nevertheless, the aforesaid request of the two Prime Ministers has not obtained any concrete response from the United Nations until the second half of November 1998. Only when process of gradual disintegration and capitulation of the Khmer Rouge leaders and the rank and file virtually reached its conclusion, then the 3 UN Experts arrived in Cambodia on a mission.

- Very soon after that, the defection on 25 November 1998, of the two former top leaders of the Khmer Rouge, namely **Khieu Samphan** and **Nuon Chea** to the Royal Government of Cambodia, culminated in the total collapse of the Khmer Rouge movement militarily and politically.

- The Royal Government of Cambodia has, therefore achieved what UNTAC and Paris Peace Accords failed.

- With the end of the Khmer Rouge as a military and political movement, the Royal Government of Cambodia is committed to focus all its attention and resources on implementing effectively and efficiently the political platform of the government for promoting the protection and respect for human rights and democratic process, as well as for economic and social development for the benefit of the people.

- So, peace and stability and national reconciliation are ***sine qua non*** conditions for economic development and poverty alleviation for the Cambodian people, who already suffered so much for more than two decades.

- The most recent arrest of **Ta Mok** - the cold-blooded butcher of the Khmer Rouge - by the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces signifies the doomsday of the last remnant of the Khmer Rouge hardliners.

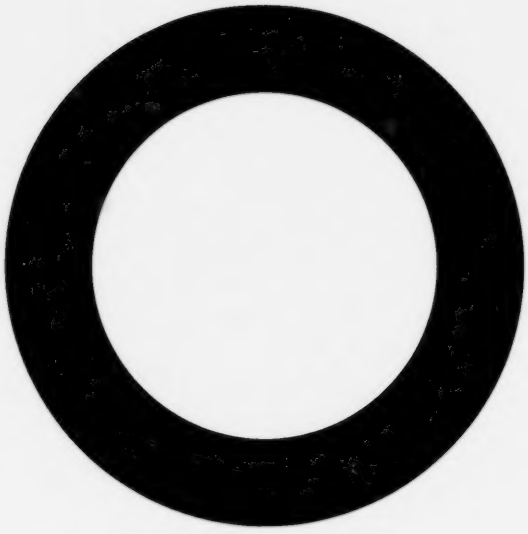
- While **Khieu Samphan** and **Noun Chea** have surrendered themselves to the Royal Government of Cambodia, **Ta Mok** as a top Khmer Rouge hard-liner, remains the most vicious murderer and has committed countless, most serious crimes until the very day he was captured by the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces.

- Thus, the national judiciary system will undertake the investigation, prosecution and trial of **Ta Mok**, the culprit, under the Cambodian law in force. The process will ensure the standards of judicial fairness and effectiveness.

- Article 33 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia prohibits the Royal Government of Cambodia to arrest and extradite Cambodian nationals to any foreign country. It stipulates that: "Cambodian nationals shall not be

deprived of their Cambodian nationality, exiled or arrested and extradited to any foreign country unless there is a mutual agreement."

- Moreover, the culprit is a Cambodian national, the victims are Cambodians, the place of the commission of the crimes is also in Cambodia; therefore the trial by a Cambodian court is fully in conformity with the legal process.



UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1999/296
18 March 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 17 MARCH 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Islamic Republic of Iran has been reluctant to request circulation of its notes verbales exchanged on a bilateral level as documents of the Security Council. It is the considered view of the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran that transmission to and circulation in the United Nations of bilateral notes verbales, particularly when they relate to issues of a purely bilateral nature which could be resolved through bilateral dialogue, would hardly help to strengthen cooperation and good-neighbourly relations between two neighbouring countries.

In view of the practice followed by the Government of the United Arab Emirates and despite our wishes to the contrary, I am prompted to reverse course. Hence, I have the honour to transmit herewith the English translation of eight notes verbales from the Islamic Republic of Iran in response to eight notes verbales from the United Arab Emirates (see annexes I-VIII). It may be noted that the original notes verbales from the United Arab Emirates and the responses thereto by the Islamic Republic of Iran cover the years 1996 and 1997.

It would be appreciated if the text of the present letter and its annexes could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hadi NEJAD HOSSEINIAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex I

Note verbale dated 1 July 1996 from the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Abu Dhabi addressed to the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates and, with reference to the note verbale dated 12 March 1996 from the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates, has the honour to state the following:

The Islamic Republic of Iran rejects the assertions contained in the aforesaid note and once again stresses its sovereignty over Abu Musa island.

While declaring that measures implemented are all on the basis of the totality of existing arrangements, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran proclaims once again its readiness to continue bilateral dialogue to remove misunderstandings, and to examine problems in the letter from His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, the Head of the United Arab Emirates, addressed to the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran on 20 April 1992.

Annex II

Note verbale dated 1 July 1996 from the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Abu Dhabi addressed to the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates and has the honour to convey the response of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the note verbale dated 22 April 1996 from the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates as follows:

While underscoring the good-neighbourly and fraternal relations between the two countries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran considers the contents of the note verbale dated 22 April 1996 of that esteemed Ministry to constitute interference in its internal affairs and in violation of its territorial integrity and rejects the notions and contents therein.

Annex III

Note verbale dated 21 September 1996 from the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Abu Dhabi addressed to the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates and, with reference to the note verbale dated 18 July 1996 from the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran addressed to the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran, has the honour to state the following:

While mutual respect for good-neighbourly relations is reconfirmed and underscored, since the note verbale mentioned above contains unprincipled and unacceptable claims which are in clear violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the notions and contents therein are categorically rejected.

Annex IV

Note verbale dated 30 October 1996 from the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Abu Dhabi addressed to the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates and, with reference to the note verbale dated 22 September 1996 from the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran addressed to the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran, has the honour to state the following:

The Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran considers the contents of the above-mentioned note as interference in its internal affairs and in violation of its territorial integrity and thus the notions and contents therein are categorically rejected.

Annex V

Note verbale dated 26 January 1997 from the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran

The Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran and, with reference to note verbale No. 911-11/8/8 dated 17 July 1996, has the honour to state the following:

The circumstances surrounding the United Arab Emirates' motor boat in question (permit No. 13 sh) were thoroughly investigated by the relevant authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The result of the investigation indicates that the motor boat has not been seized by the Iranian law-enforcement agents.

Annex VI

Note verbale dated 2 March 1997 from the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran

The Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran and, with reference to the note verbale date 24 October 1996 from the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates addressed to the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Abu Dhabi, has the honour to state the following:

The circumstances surrounding motor boats Nos. 133 and 2222 were thoroughly investigated by the relevant authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The result of the investigation indicates that, on 26 September 1996, Iranian patrol boats did not intercept or come across any boats belonging to nationals of the United Arab Emirates. Therefore, the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran categorically rejects the contents of the note verbale referred to above.

Annex VII

Note verbale dated 2 March 1997 from the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran

The Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran and, with reference to the note verbale dated 24 September 1996 from the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates addressed to the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Abu Dhabi, has the honour to state the following:

According to reports from the relevant authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the patrol boats of the Islamic Republic of Iran have had no engagement with fishing boats belonging to nationals of the United Arab Emirates. Therefore, the contents of the said note verbale are categorically rejected.

Annex VIII

Note verbale dated 17 March 1997 from the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran

The Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran and, with reference to the note verbale dated 14 November 1996 from the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates addressed to the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Abu Dhabi, has the honour to state the following:

The Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran considers the contents of the above-referenced note verbale to constitute interference in its internal affairs and hence the notions and contents therein are categorically rejected.